

GEOFF IS OUR
RESIDENT OF
THE YEAR - P2

Meet the man
who is giving
older people
a voice and
making a
difference to
his community



WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING FOR YOU - P4&5
Find out what the housing service has done in
the past year and the priorities for the next



GOT A HOUSING REPAIR? REPORT AND TRACK IT ONLINE - P7

Residents can now make and monitor the progress of
non-emergency repairs online via the new Council web
service called the One Account

ISSUE 4 | 14 November 2016
Working for better homes

ourhomes



Young people from the Suffolk Estate enjoy a fun day to celebrate 20 years of resident management

And the resident survey says...

NINE key areas of concern
raised by thousands of
residents in the first all-
resident survey will be the
focus of a multi-pronged action plan by
Hackney Council.

The plan aims to:

- Achieve 'right first time' repairs and better communal maintenance in homes and buildings
- Better listen to residents and act upon their concerns
- Improve internal and external cleaning on blocks and estates

- Tackle parking dissatisfaction
- Deal more effectively with noisy neighbours
- Tackle antisocial behaviour on estates
- Improve the way residents are served when they contact us
- Ensure better value for money services
- Improve grounds maintenance

Some 13 per cent of tenants and leaseholders – around 4,000 people – took part in the satisfaction survey, which was carried out this summer.

It was the first time both tenants' and leaseholders' views were gathered together at the same time.

Cllr Claydon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, said: "The survey told us that there were some things residents were happy with, such as their satisfaction with the quality of their homes and the neighbourhoods they live in.

"But, what the survey also said was that there many things we need to improve upon, and our action plan will tackle nine areas as a priority.

"We are already making some headway with cleaning, bringing our leading street cleaning service onto estates. Staff will soon be using mobile and smart technology, which we believe will bring a vastly improved repairs services. And we've begun communicating better with residents and exploring ways to better involve them in decision-making."

He added: "We'll be keeping you updated with the progress on all the issues, as and when they happen."

For more on the survey, go to p3.

Working for better homes



Geoff Gleadhill, right, Resident of the Year, with former Hackney Homes Board Chair, Rupert Tyson MBE

RETIRED postie, Geoff Gleadhill, may not have any more letters to sort but he certainly is delivering for the borough.

Volunteer Geoff is an active member of the community, sitting on six committees, helping out at Council events, and working with four local community groups.

“He goes above and beyond the call of duty for the community”

So it was no surprise that he picked up the Resident of the Year Award at the housing service's Active Residents Awards, earlier this year.

Geoff is originally from Hull but has lived on Fields Estate, E8, with his wife Jean for the past 40 years. The 79-year-old is enthusiastic about keeping community spirit alive: “Making sure everyone looks after each other is really important,” he said. Adding: “Volunteering and getting involved with local events is a great way to bring a community together.”

One of the most recent events Geoff was involved in was the Council's free housing service fun day at St Thomas Square, attended by almost 400 residents.

He said: “There were people from all walks of life, different ages and different nationalities. Seeing the smiles on everyone's faces, everyone getting along,

made me realise how important events like these are.”

He added: “Volunteering in the community is really worthwhile, you get to meet lots of people, get out of the house and make a difference.”

Annie Hooper, Community Involvement Officer from older person's charity Connect Hackney, one of the four groups for which Geoff volunteers, said: “He is a fantastic volunteer, he has helped improve services for older people.”

The group presented him with a Community Achievement Award recently, because, Annie added: “He goes above and beyond the call of duty for the community.”

Geoff ensures the voice of older residents is heard. He said: “I am just one older person, but when there is lots of older people together on a committee, like the over 55s committee, we can all share our ideas and make changes that improve people's lives.”

Geoff is enthusiastic about empowering older people to leave their homes, to try new things and to keep active.

“Unless you try it, you don't know if you're going to like it,” he explained.

Have you been inspired to get involved with your local community?

Visit: www.hackney.gov.uk/get-involved

Volunteering is worthwhile. You get to make a difference

Beware of bogus callers on estates

RESIDENTS living in estates and blocks of flats are being urged to be vigilant for bogus callers following a spike in distraction burglaries in the borough.

There has been a 68 per cent rise in crime where a burglar has gained access to a home by pretending to be someone from an official organisation, such as the Council or a utility company. Nearly 70 per cent have taken place in Council properties, with offenders often posing as Council workers.

The most common method is to say there is a leak. Then, one person distracts the victim whilst leaving the door ajar for another to enter and steal valuables.

Cllr Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement, said: “We're currently

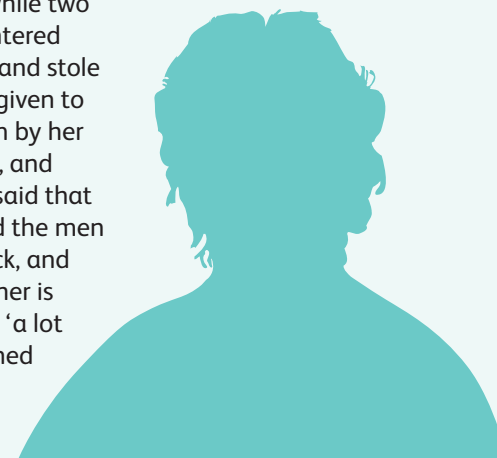
“We are exploring neighbourhood watch schemes for some of our estates”

delivering advice leaflets to residents and displaying them on notice boards on estates. We are also exploring neighbourhood watch schemes for some estates and working hard with our partners to help tackle this crime.”

Residents are being urged to be cautious of anyone who comes to the door; to always ask for ID and confirm it; to refrain from keeping large amounts of cash in the home; and to never agree to go to a bank to withdraw cash with anyone.

‘My mum is terrified that the men will come back’

NANCY BURKE'S 76-year-old mother was the victim of a distraction burglary at Cropley Court, in Shoreditch, in July. A man came to the door wearing a high-vis jacket and a cap, and claimed to be there to check the gas. Nancy's mum had said people had knocked at her door most afternoons and evenings for around two months but she had only opened the door this time because her sister, 88, was there at the time. Once the man had gained access, he trapped the two elderly women in the kitchen while two other men entered the property and stole jewellery, all given to Nancy's mum by her late husband, and cash. Nancy said that she's terrified the men will come back, and that her mother is ‘shaken’ and ‘a lot more frightened than she lets on’.



Working for better homes



Here's what you told us



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE Council's action plan to tackle some of the most pressing issues raised by tenants and leaseholders is a result of the feedback it received in its all-resident survey carried out this summer.

Nearly 4,000 people – or 13 per cent of all residents living in Council-owned or managed properties and

estates – took part in the independent census, the first in six years.

The purpose of the survey was to gather views and understand satisfaction with the services we provide, following the full transition of management to the Council from Hackney Homes in April, and to establish the future priorities of the new housing service.

The results will also allow

the Council to measure how we're doing compared to other housing providers.

The results show a divide in satisfaction, with tenants generally happier with the services provided by the Council, and leaseholders less content. The biggest split was around repairs and maintenance, with tenants more content with the quality and service provided compared to leaseholders.

In addition, leaseholders do not think the services provided generally represent value for money.

Other key themes included very high satisfaction from both tenants and leaseholders with their neighbourhood as a place to live, at 80 per cent and 74 per cent respectively; and 66 per cent satisfaction with the overall quality of homes from both tenants and

leaseholders.

However, there was broad discontent over how the Council listens to residents, with satisfaction at just 47 per cent from tenants and 23 per cent from leaseholders. In addition, neither group found it easy to get hold of the right person when contacting the Council about issues.

Cllr Claydon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services, said:

"The feedback has been incredibly mixed and shows we have a lot of work to do."

"The action plan we're developing, alongside your resident representatives, will allow us to concentrate on fixing the things that matter most to you. We'll be letting you know about these changes as and when they happen."

The survey will be available to view online soon.

Overall satisfaction

66%

66%

were satisfied with the overall quality of their homes

25%

were satisfied that their service charge provides value for money

66%

67%

were satisfied with the overall services provided by Hackney Council

were satisfied that their rent provides value for money

42%

80%

74%

were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live

Repairs and maintenance

were satisfied with the way Hackney Council deals with repairs and maintenance of communal areas

31%

were satisfied with the way Hackney Council deals with repairs and maintenance

62%

were satisfied that their repair was done 'right first time'

69%

were satisfied with the repairs service they received on that occasion

72%

21%



tenants



leaseholders

Contact with the Council



found it easy to get hold of the right person

47% 47%

found the staff helpful

67% 38%

found that the staff were able to deal with the repair problem

59% 33%

were satisfied with the final outcome of their repair

51% 26%

How well the Council listens to and involves residents

47% 23%

were satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them

60% 45%

were satisfied at being kept informed by the Council housing service

47% 31%

were satisfied with the opportunities to get involved in decisions relating to all service.

Working for better homes



THIS is for all Hackney Council tenants and leaseholders. It gives you an overview of what the housing service has been doing for you over the past 12 months. It also allows the Council to reflect on what it has done well, where it can improve, and explain how it is going to make things better.

A year in figures:

£26.5m: how much was spent on improvement works during the year. This includes £11.1m spent on making 137 homes 'decent' – safer, warmer, greener and more modern – as part of the Decent Homes Programme last year.

It has seen:

917 kitchens modernised

884 bathrooms modernised

2,075 old boilers replaced

122 homes better insulated

22 homes fitted with renewable energy supplies

176 properties rewired

258: the number of homes installed with potentially lifesaving sprinklers in Frampton Park estate.

£100m: pledged towards fitting new kitchens and bathrooms for Council tenants over the next decade as part of the Hackney Investment Programme, which replaced Hackney Homes Decent Homes Programme.

£1m: invested in reducing damp and mould and to insulate properties since last November.

16%: the average recycling rate on 13 pilot estates, this is up from an average 8 per cent in the previous year, and is expected to improve much further this year.

84: the number of homes returned to our ownership from tenants illegally subletting or which had been obtained by fraudulent declarations.

£41,500: the money spent on events for residents. This includes £11,500 for tenant and resident associations to host community events in their neighbourhoods as part of National Family Week, Neighbours' Day, and The Big Lunch.

1,168: the number of times the Council prevented people from being made homeless.

How is residents money spent?

This is how the Council spent each pound received from rent, services charges and from the Government:

35p: Staff costs: to ensure housing services are supported and delivered

26p: Repairs and maintenance: to ensure estates and homes are in good working order

23p: Capital charges: the cost of using our properties over their useful life

9p: Cleaning and gardening: to ensure communal areas are clean and tidy

4p: Tenant management organisations (TMOs): to make sure TMOs – organisations set up by residents who wish to manage all or part of the housing on their estate – are able to function properly.

3p: Rent, rates and other charges, to cover the running costs of some of the properties and buildings in which the housing service is based.

Your priorities 'Hackney Local Offer'

Residents said they wanted us to focus on making improvements in:

- **Antisocial behaviour**
- **Estate services (cleaning and grounds maintenance)**
- **Repairs**

The Council looked at *12 indicators (aims) within these three areas in order to measure how it did.

Key:

- We are **happy** with our performance because we are meeting our target
- We are **satisfied** with our performance because we are close to meeting our target – it is within **10%**
- We are **disappointed** with our performance as we are not meeting our target – performance is outside the **10%** threshold. However, we are looking at ways to **improve** our performance.

* These aims and measurements were set when the service was managed by Hackney Homes. The Council is duty-bound to publish these. However, this year, it will set new measurements to more accurately reflect resident experience.

Antisocial behaviour (ASB)

Our aim	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	Improvement on previous year?	Meeting target
60% of tenants satisfied with handling of ASB cases	56.32 %	71.76 %		
60% tenants satisfied with the outcome of ASB	53.33 %	66.03 %		

How the Council plans to improve:

The Council is pleased with its progress in tackling antisocial behaviour.

Here's how it plans to improve:

- Increase work with the police to deal with complaints relating to noise nuisance
- Improve how it helps young people suspected of being risk of becoming part of gang to prevent them from falling into a life of crime
- Make more effective use of the legal system to deal with antisocial behaviour.



To report a non-emergency repair
call: **020 8356 3691**

It's easier and quicker to pay
Council Tax by direct debit.
Go to: hackney.gov.uk/housing

**SPOT
LIGHT**

Estate environment

Our aim	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	Improvement on previous year?	Meeting target
98% of estate cleaning inspections graded 'good' or 'acceptable'	98.03 %	98.05 %	↑	😊
98% of grounds maintenance inspections graded 'good' or 'acceptable'	98.90 %	99.35 %	↑	😊
70% of tenants satisfied with estate cleaning	58.61 %	57.17 %	↓	😞
70% of tenants satisfied with grounds maintenance	68.04 %	67.55 %	↓	😊
70% of tenants satisfied with overall estate services provision	67.89 %	64.69 %	↓	😊

How the Council plans to improve:

Since August 2016, the external estate cleaning service has been integrated with the street cleaning service, this means:

- External areas will be cleaned more often and additional support will be provided to estate cleaners
- Mechanical road sweepers and specialist crews will be introduced to deal with problem issues, such as graffiti, fly-tipping and bulky waste
- Better allocation of resource to ensure there is enough cleaning cover at all times.

Next year, the Council will be reporting two new indicators:

Internal cleaning of blocks

External cleaning of estates

Both scores will come from an average of the ratings provided by residents on areas such as cleaning of windows, lifts, play areas, and more.

Repairs

How the Council plans to improve:

- The repairs service has now gone online, allowing residents to make a non-emergency repair request; request an appointment at a convenient time; track repair status; and more
- The Council will try to ensure that repair jobs are correctly diagnosed first time
- If a repair can't be completed on the first visit, residents will be told in advance, or the worker will say if more work is needed and why a second visit will have to take place.

Our aim	2014/15 Performance	2015/16 Performance	Improvement on previous year?	Meeting target
90% of repairs appointments kept	85.32 %	81.41 %	↓	😊
82% of repairs completed on first visit	75.54 %	73.06 %	↓	😞
96.5% of all repairs completed within target time	97.09 %	95.97 %	↓	😊
85% of residents satisfied with the quality of repairs work	81.62 %	83.44 %	↑	😊
70% of all new tenants are satisfied with the condition of the property	59.52 %	66.21 %	↑	😊

National Performance 2015/16



The areas that the Council needs to improve are:

- Obtaining tenants' ethnicity information
- Satisfaction with complaints handling
- Time taken to respond to complaint
- Completing repairs on our first visit.

How the Council plans to improve on handling complaints:

- The time taken to respond to complaints has improved by 15 % in the last year, and the Council aims to do better this year by focusing on resolving complaints as quickly as possible
- The Council will try to ensure that all aspects of the complaint are addressed
- The Council will write to let residents know if the response to a complaint will take longer than 15 working days

The areas that the Council is close to meeting are:



- Keeping repair appointments
- Completing all repairs within target time
- Satisfaction with the quality of repair work
- Percentage of dwellings meeting the Decent Homes Standard
- Collecting rent and arrears.

The areas in which our performance or target are met are:



- Average time taken to let empty homes
- Satisfaction with handling antisocial behaviour complaints
- Satisfaction with the outcome of antisocial behaviour complaints
- The standard for estate cleaning inspections
- The standard for grounds maintenance inspection.

Working for better homes



Ten estates in Hackney are managed by residents with help and support from Hackney Council. We examine how that works and look at the benefits to the residents living there



IMAGINE being in charge of the day-to-day running of a housing estate, potentially with hundreds of residents and homes to look after.

Imagine, still, you have little experience in management, let alone the housing industry. It seems like a daunting ask. Impossible even.

But with a bit of help, training and support, and with a lot of hard work and self-belief, residents across Hackney have been successfully taking charge of the neighbourhoods they live in for more than two decades.

So how does it work? Residents come together to form a group, known as a Tenant Management

“The potential residents can offer the TMO and contribute to the local community is huge”

Organisation (TMO). Each TMO has its own legal contract with Hackney Council, choosing and outlining what services the TMO is responsible for and what services the Council provides, with most funded by the Council.

In other words, the big decisions that most effect residents in a block or estate – such as those relating to rent collection, repairs, cleaning

and community cohesion – are taken by the people who live there.

However, there are rigorous checks potential TMOs must pass before reaching contract stage, including business training and competency assessments. And, crucially, approval is needed from residents themselves via secret ballot.

One of Hackney's oldest

groups is the Suffolk TMO, near London Fields, which is responsible for some 297 homes as well as the communal areas of the estate.

“Residents have the opportunity to make the important decisions that have a direct impact on them and their neighbourhood,” said Clare Moloney, Chair of the Management Committee of the TMO. Adding: “They are empowered to use their daily experience of living in the estate to inform and influence the quality of housing services, repairs, social, entertainment and community benefit activities.”

She added: “During our last resident survey 87 per cent of residents were very satisfied with the estate and the neighbourhood, and only three residents were dissatisfied.”

The 1960s estate spans one of Hackney's most vibrant areas, with Broadway Market running the length of its eastern perimeter and the picturesque Regent's Canal, to its southern border. And that brings with it is own particular set of challenges and demands.

Clare said: “We feel very positive about the area, but there is a disparity between the ‘wealth’ of users of Broadway Market and some of the residents living on the estate. We would like to see more cooperation and connection between these two worlds.”

“The estate is very diverse in terms of age, culture, professions

and experience. The potential these residents can offer the TMO and contribute to the local community is huge.”

This year, the group held a party to mark its 20th anniversary, and there has been plenty to celebrate. The TMO has overseen projects as diverse as a cavity wall and loft insulation installation programme; excursions; gardening schemes; and employment training.

And this year, there was further cause for celebration when the TMO was awarded a Kitemark for excellence in governance. The only one of Hackney's 10 TMOs to achieve the recognition. Clare is rightly proud, but admits it is not without its challenges.

She said: “Being in a TMO is hugely powerful, but you need to be aware it is a big responsibility. Residents need to be active and engaged to make it work. Encouraging more residents to get involved is hard. There are lots of skill sets on the estate and if lots more people gave just only a little time now and then, it is amazing what could be achieved.”

MORE INFO

To find out more about TMOs and how to go about setting up your own, go to: hackney.gov.uk/tenant-management-organisations

How the Council can help TMOs

- Setting up a TMO: the Council will work closely with residents, providing funding to employ an expert to provide tailored support
- Training: the Council will provide free training
- TMO strategy: the TMO strategy commits the Council to working in partnership with TMO for the benefit of residents
- Dedicated Council team: Hackney has five officers dedicated to supporting TMOs in the borough
- TMO forum: A bimonthly forum that brings together tenants, TMOs and the Council to share support and give feedback
- Performance: the Council will help with TMO performance, providing a report to help on target delivery
- Governance improvement: a risk management tool is used by the Council to reduce issues and improve governance of the TMO.





Discuss tenancy issues:
020 8356 3330/4440



**You can report
antisocial behaviour to
us 24-hours a day**

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Make repair requests online

COUNCIL tenants and leaseholders are now able to make non-emergency housing repair requests online thanks to a new Council web service called **One Account**.

One Account is a free, quick and secure way for residents to use and manage a host of Council services online, replacing traditional paper forms or the need to phone or visit the Council in person. The new repairs service will allow residents to:

- Make a non-emergency repair request to a home (tenants only), block or estate
- Book or request an appointment for a repairs worker to visit at a convenient time
- Amend or cancel appointments raised online
- Track the status of repairs raised
- View repairs history of a home, block or estate
- Send an enquiry about a repair.

As well as housing repairs, Council services available on the One Account include Council Tax, housing benefit, landlord services and business rate management.

Registration to use the One Account is easy and once signed in, residents can set-up their webpage to only see the services that are important to them.

Visit Hackney Council online: www.hackney.gov.uk and click 'One Account sign in/register'.

**One Account is
a free, quick and
secure way to use
Council services**



Test fire alarms

RESIDENTS are being urged to test their smoke alarms every month after research showed that only 28 per cent of all households who have a detector test them on a regular basis.

There were 229 fire-related deaths in the home across the country last year.

Data shows that you are at least seven times more likely to die in a fire in the home if you do not have any working smoke alarms.

Keep yourself and your family safe by testing your smoke alarm now, making sure there is a working smoke alarm on every level of your home, testing them monthly, never removing the batteries, and planning an escape route.

For more information visit:

www.gov.uk/firekills



Kings Crescent: regeneration fit for royalty

RESIDENTS at the Kings Crescent Estate welcomed royalty last week when HRH The Duke of Kent visited Hackney for a tour of the Council's landmark regeneration scheme.

The Duke donned a hard hat to see how some of the 765 new and refurbished homes for social rent, shared ownership and outright sale are being built by the Council's partner Higgins Construction for local people, as well as meeting residents who have found jobs and apprenticeships through the work.

Welcome and introduction from the new Cabinet Member for Housing

"HELLO, my name's Cllr Clayeon McKenzie. It's both a pleasure and privilege to be representing residents in such an important area: housing services.

As a homeless person in the 90s, getting a council home transformed my life. I've been a council resident all of my adult life, and a TRA and TMO activist for years before becoming a councillor, so I feel I have the right background and experience

to fight for the things that matter most to you. Provision of good quality council housing is something I care passionately about. This year we've pledged millions of pounds to ensuring that tenants live in the standard of homes they deserve and expect, with thousands of you in line for new kitchens and bathrooms. My ambition is to build on the fantastic work of Mayor Glanville, who was Cabinet Member for Housing,

and see complaints go down and be reflected in genuine resident satisfaction.

Our resident satisfaction survey (p1 and 3) shows that we have a long way to go to ensuring tenants, and especially leaseholders, feel happy with the service we provide. Our plans for improvements (p1) have already begun, and I am confident you will see start seeing benefits immediately.

Lastly, I want to reflect on the

annual resident report (p5-6). The aims and how those were measured were compiled when the service was under management of Hackney Homes, whose successes we continue to build upon. We are duty-bound to publish them. However, in future, I will be looking at new targets and measurements that I think better and more accurately reflect resident satisfaction and experience."



